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HOW THE ARMY FIGHTS I

SENIOR LEADER TABLE TOP EXERCISE

FINAL REPORT



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PREPARED BY:
ARMY CAPABILITIES INTEGRATION CENTER
FUTURE WARFARE DIVISION

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of “How the Army Fights” (HTAF) I Senior Leader Table Top Exercise (TTX) was to gain senior leader insights on how the Army *could* fight in a 2030 operating environment across multiple domains. The four-hour exercise included over 150 senior leaders from across TRADOC with representatives from the Centers of Excellence (CoEs), Capabilities Development Integration Directorates (CDIDs), 75th Ranger Regiment, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Marine Corps, as well as Canadian and Australian partners. Future Warfare Division (FWD) from the Army Capability Integration Center (ARCIC) hosted the classified event on 24 February 2016 at the Maneuver Battle Lab, Fort Benning, Georgia.

ADP 3-0 *Unified Land Operations* and more specifically, the *deep, close, security* area operational framework, served as the doctrinal foundation and organizing construct for the seminar wargame question architecture.¹ At the onset of the event, the Commanding General, Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) spoke to the participants, asking them to envision potential future capabilities in order to start implementing doctrine, organization, training, material, leadership and education, facilities, and policy (DOTMLPF-P) decisions in the near-term. Moreover, he noted that future force capabilities are not an “all or nothing” proposition; rather, infusing capabilities into the future force ought to be an incremental process begun quickly and modified over time.

METHOD

The classified HTAF I design consisted of a top-down investigation utilizing two distinct participant groups. Group one comprised TRADOC senior leaders including the Commanding General, TRADOC; Director, ARCIC; CoE Commanders and Sergeants Majors; and other TRADOC Commandants/Command Sergeants Major teams. Group two comprised representatives from the TRADOC CoE and their respective CDIDs. Participants in this group interacted using the Battle Lab Collaboration Simulation Environment (BLCSE) network to comment on a series of research questions using Facilitate Pro (FacPro) – a web-based collaboration tool. The FWD Integration and Analysis (I&A) team collected participant responses in FacPro, which served as the primary database for analysis (see Annex A for complete list of questions).

RESULTS

Participants provided feedback on eighteen research questions that, in post-event analysis, were categorized into nine topic areas: operate differently; overmatch; shape the security environment; transitions; command and support relationships; situational understanding; sustain high tempo operations; operate with joint, interorganizational, and multinational partners; and consolidate gains.

Within the selected topics below, the I&A team inserted Army concept and/or doctrine

¹ *Deep operations* includes activities to prevent uncommitted enemy forces from being committed in a coherent manner. *Close operations* are operations that occur within a subordinate commander’s area of operations that include security operations to provide early and accurate warning of enemy operations to retain freedom of action and to ensure uninterrupted support. *Security area operations* is the space in the battlefield framework that joint reception, staging, onward movement and integration (JRSOI) occurs, as well as sustainment operations occurring outside the main battle area.

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definitions (in some cases Joint concepts or doctrine were used). The intent was deliberate insofar as it provided context and a grounded representation before introducing participant responses.

a. Operate Differently

The HTAF I exercise challenged participants to describe how future Army forces *could* operate in the 2030 timeframe. The TRADOC commander spoke to this point in depth; for example, stressing the importance of understanding Army core competencies, such as joint combined arms maneuver. The specific question he presented to participants was, “How could forces operate differently?”

[See HTAF-I Final Report version “For Official Use Only” for additional observations]

b. Overmatch

Army doctrine does not include a description for the term overmatch.² Joint doctrine, however, associates the term with the *dominate* phase of joint operations during which overmatching enemy capabilities at the crucial time and place is the central operational focus and requirement.³ With the publication of the Army Operating Concept (AOC) in October 2014, overmatch was broadly defined as: “The application of capabilities or unique tactics either directly or indirectly, with the intent to prevent or mitigate opposing forces from using their current or projected equipment or tactics” (p.47).

HTAF participants corroborated this definition but noted that overmatch is also achieved through education and training by preparing Soldiers to better visualize and understand important nuances in their operating environment and to marshal resources in a time-constrained environment to achieve objectives before conditions, and the opportunity for overmatch, changes.

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Conversely, it was observed that Red’s apparent air defense overmatch is a result of studying and understanding how Western forces and their surrogates operate. These studies have prompted Red to invest heavily in air defense, under the assumption that Western forces have frequently been able to attain temporary and/or lasting air superiority. This *coevolution* (blue overmatch, red overmatch) is significant because it reinforces the changing nature of conflict.

c. Shape the Security Environment

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To mitigate tension in the deep area, participants proposed a *hybrid construct* to shape the security environment. The proposal called for increasing forward presence with selected capability sets designed to meet Geographic Combatant Command (GCC) requirements during Phase 0. This option also called for re-designing Army Prepositioned Stocks (APS) to complement forward presence by allowing the deployment and employment of scaled force structures. Others recognized the information environment (IE) as decisive terrain. While this is not a new idea, further development could mitigate shortcomings of forward presence and assist in shaping the theater.

² The term overmatch is not referred to in ADP 3-0 or ADRP 3-0.

³ JP 3-0, Joint Operations, 2011, p.V8

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Other participants noted that Army forces shape the Brigade Combat Team (BCT) close fight by assuring mobility while denying mobility to the enemy, and employing lethal and non-lethal joint munitions, to include intelligent networked area denial systems. Alternatively, other proposals included the use of automated or tele-operated unmanned systems teamed with manned combat vehicles and Soldiers to close with and destroy enemy forces; persistent reconnaissance and surveillance platforms at platoon level for precision targeting; and improvements in munitions and weapon ranges to overmatch the enemy. Finally, participants acknowledged that shaping in the security area requires the ability to protect and secure lines of communication (LOCs) which could require a significant commitment of combat power to accomplish this objective.

d. Transitions⁴

The question posited was, “How does the future force transition rapidly to joint combined arms operations?” Participants provided mixed results. Some concluded Army training and education need to become more Joint because the Army is an integral component of the Joint Force. Others noted that anticipating transitions is extremely difficult for any Service component, as complications in planning and operating arise quickly for the Joint Force. For example, the emerging Joint Concept for Integrated Campaigning (JCIC) notes the challenges with the current phasing construct (i.e., based on new-found appreciation of the changes in the future operating environment and an examination of lessons from recent campaigns) and the need to reassess the existing phasing construct to understand and manage transitions differently.

Another response indicated the Intelligence Community–Information Technology Enterprise (IC-ITE) would enable future forces to access and use the entire intelligence enterprise in Phase 0 prior to executing their missions. As a result, the capability to establish common situational understanding will mitigate the difficulties associated with transitions at tactical, operational, and strategic levels.

Other responses indicated that no transition exists because, in major operations or campaigns, the Army is not separate from the Joint Force. According to this, future forces and their capabilities shape the operating environment continuously, especially in the deep fight.

e. Command and Support Relationships

The question, “How should current Army command and support relationships change to improve force effectiveness?” was intentionally broad so as not to constrain responses. While participants did not cite command or support relationships as described in Army or Joint doctrine,⁵ they did address them within the deep, close, and security area operational framework. For example, a few responses indicated the Army should operationalize mission command structures with hybrid standing joint task force (JTF) structures. Similarly, others indicated that solutions to the question could only be answered by making the future force more joint.⁶

⁴ Joint doctrine addresses transition in the form of a common operating precept: “Plan for and manage operational transitions over time and space” (JP 3-0, p.V-7).

⁵ FM 6-0 (Change 1) Command and Support Relationships, Appendix B, dated 11 May 2015. This manual supersedes ATTP 5-01.1, dated 14 September 2011. Command relationships: organic, assigned, attached, operational control, and tactical control. Support relationships: direct support, general support, reinforcing, and general support-reinforcing.

⁶ Precisely “how” this might occur was not articulated.

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One insight indicated that area support is a *method*, not a command or support relationship. Essentially, the participant believed strongly that effective command and support relationships in sustainment reside in force structure. For example, current doctrine (ADP 4-0 Sustainment) indicates that echelon above brigade (EAB) sustainment formations are allocated as general support (GS) to maneuver elements. Alternatively, participants observed that once a battlefield geometry is determined, the identification of command support relationships will become less abstract based on who owns or supervises battlespace in the deep, close, and security framework.

f. Situational Understanding

Both Joint and Army doctrine (including concepts) use the term *situational understanding* (SU) in different contexts; i.e., gaining SU, commander's SU, common SU, cyber SU, facilitating SU, and many others. For this reason, it is important to start from a known point: Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 6-0, *Mission Command*. According to this, situational understanding is a result of processed data and analyzed information, which creates knowledge.

One discussion focused on urban environments where Army forces operate amongst the people. In this case, military police capabilities are complementary to civil affairs, special operations, and military intelligence forces already operating in theater. In other words, military police capabilities would not compete with other friendly capabilities (forces) in theater but could team with them to develop a common, and perhaps a comprehensive, SU on population centers and demographics, including local leader profiles. This teaming effect increases situational understanding; it also creates the conditions for future force overmatch.

Participants also expressed concern about the potential for a large number of headquarters operating in the support area. This may confound situational understanding if there is no central manager responsible for support area operations and SU development. The maneuver enhancement brigade (MEB), or the BCT responsible for area security, gain enhanced situational understanding by learning through action, whereas brigade staffs gain SU by processing data and analyzing the information relative to security operations. This creates a consolidated situational understanding used by forces operating in and through the security area.

g. Sustain High Tempo Operations

The question posed to participants for the close fight and the security area was "How will Army forces sustain high tempo operations across extended and contested LOCs?" The AOC highlights the importance of the Joint Force's ability to implement foreign policy and achieve favorable outcomes aligned with U.S. interests. Additionally, sustaining high tempo operations with contested supply lines requires capabilities ranging from technological improvements in fuel efficiency (operational energy) to information systems connecting all echelons that will anticipate sustainment needs and increase reliability.

Like the previous questions, participants responded with a variety of possible capabilities: changing haul capacities; building a robust sustainment common operating picture (COP); enhancing force protection on the move; and, utilizing lethal and non-lethal effects. A divergent discussion emerged concerning the shift of organic fires capability to echelon above brigade (EAB) formations, which, according to participants, affects the BCTs ability to influence operational tempo. One counterpoint to this was long range fires, and its ability to mitigate a need for organic fires assets to travel with the unit.

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h. Operate with Joint, Interorganizational, and Multinational (JIM) Partners

The AOC identifies requirements for the next-generation mission command systems to be fully interoperable with allies and allow the synchronization of joint, Army, interorganizational, and multinational efforts. It also states that systems designed for situational understanding (including autonomy-enabled systems) must also be interoperable with JIM partners’ systems.

In general, participants diverged little from these AOC requirements. For example, one response indicated that in the deep and close fight, information and collection systems will have to be interoperable, multi-domain, and seamless. These systems will also need to share and release information based on predetermined access levels. Moreover, future Army systems will need to be compatible with joint systems and sensors. In this way, service components and coalition partners can more rapidly exchange data, information, and knowledge.

Somewhat different was a response indicating that the following methods might be effective in the close fight: liaison structures between special operations forces, conventional forces, and unified action partners; governmental advisory teams (GAT); and security cooperation activities such as Title 22 activities.

i. Consolidate Gains

Both the AOC and Army doctrine refer to the concept of *consolidating gains* as an essential element of retaining the initiative. The distinction, however minor, is that Army doctrine refers to consolidating gains as a sub-component of wide area security (ADP 3-0, p.6). Among the discussions, participants considered the term in variety of contexts. For example, efforts in support of consolidating gains begin at the onset of *operations planning* which includes resourcing; i.e., providing essential services to populations, protecting populations, mitigating actions that may produce civil unrest, and conducting detention operations.

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Participants considered other elements of consolidating gains to be a combination of factors. These are included below.

- Integrating Joint, Interorganizational, and Multinational partners;
- Combining defeat and stability mechanisms when developing courses of action;
- Influencing local populations through information operations to prevent hostilities;
- Preventing disenfranchisement of local populations through wide area security;
- Retaining sufficient combat power to respond to enemy action; and,
- Developing reserve component formations to focus on consolidating of gains.

A WAY FORWARD

The next How the Army Fights Senior Leader Discussion is 25 August 2016. The design, agenda and participants are preliminary; however, they will be the same as HTAF I TTX to enable study continuity. Additionally, the HTAF design includes a three-tier cycle approach to learning. **Tier 1** is the capstone event for senior TRADOC leader discussions concerning the Army’s role in future warfare. **Tier 2** comprises a Council of Colonels (CoC) that conduct preliminary wargaming to define the tactical and operational problems. **Tier 3** (called the *Chaffee Group*)

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contains staff officers from CDLD/ARCIC, and CoE/CDIDs including outside subject matter experts from across the community of practice (See Annex E for more detail concerning the *Chaffee Group*).

By March 2017, the Army Capabilities Integration Center will produce a HTAF white paper that will provide the necessary fidelity to further the Army's understanding of its role in future conflict. Further, it will help the concept and capability development communities address gaps that could degrade the Army of 2030's ability to fight and win in a complex world. This white paper will serve as a bridge between the AOC, the Army Functional Concepts, Vision of Future Conflict, and the Organizational and Operational (O&O) concept developers.⁷

⁷ CDLD/FWD Information Paper, "How the Army Fights" (HTAF-I) – Council of Colonels Workgroup, 18 Feb 16.

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For additional information on Unified Quest Future Study Plan
Contact Future Warfare Division, Army Capabilities Integration Center,
U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, Fort Eustis, Virginia 23604

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